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who gave away to the original head of the family what he never saw or possessed, and which is yet in its virgin condition; not that there are none willing to use it, but because the *owner* will not permit any one to do so.

Under the George theory the occupier is secure in his tenure so long as he pays his tax, which, if he is a lessee, he pays anyhow, and if an owner has already paid in a lump sum. The only difference is that the State would receive what now a private individual pockets.

It is the present system that gives only an insecure tenure to the occupier, as is evidenced by such words in common use as rack-rent and eviction.

Mr. Ferris is unhappy in his assertion that Henry George regards government possession of land as a specific cure for social and industrial evils.

Henry George, and every one else, holds that the government, being a representative of the people in their corporate capacity, cannot have powers delegated to it which the citizen never possessed, and since he holds that private property in land is unjust, as a sequence governmental property in land must also be unjust.

The idea seems to pervade some people's thoughts that somebody *must own* the land. This is not at all necessary; all that is essential is that somebody *use* it, and, if it have an added value, due to population and social conditions, justice demands that that product be paid to the producers of it—the community; by so doing we could dispense with all the present iniquitous taxes which burden production and exchange, and thereby retard development.

Critics would be less liable to misstatement and consequent error as to what the theory is if they would first study it as expounded by Henry George in "Progress and Poverty."

VI.

BENJ. DOBLIN.

MUTILATIONS OF SHAKSPERE.

THE POET INTERVIEWED.

THE works of *Æschylus*, of *Sophocles*, of *Euripedes*, and of *Aristophanes* come down to us out of the theatres of Greece as those poets gave them to the world, and, so far as we have any record, the players of succeeding centuries continued to present them textually. So it fares with the Roman dramatic writers; we can find no trace in history or in contemporaneous criticism that any of their works underwent, during the centuries that followed their production, any reformation. The change of times, which the Roman poet claims would cause a change in the minds of men, did not seem to affect those monuments of literature. Regarding other arts, we do not find the paintings and sculpture of our great masters are subjected to alteration by the hustle and bustle of their successors. On the contrary, they are preserved with costly care. How would a new edition of *Dante*, of *Cervantes*, or of *Milton*, interpolated, mutilated and remade by Mr. *Napoleon Tate* be received and considered? What then is there in the works of *Shakspere*, that Messrs. *Colley Cibber*, *David Garrick*, *John Kemble*, during the last century should have found it proper and necessary to treat them as architects treat ruins, when they pull them down to use their materials for new structures. It is significant that these reformers of *Shakspere* were actors. And it is to actors of the present day we owe the new acting edition of the poet. The actors of the last century cut and curtailed sundry plays so as to leave projected the figure of the tragedian who performed the principal role. *Cibber* worked with that object for *Betterton* and the group of tragedians that figured during the beginning of the eighteenth century. *Garrick* and *Kemble* tailored to fit themselves. With the advent of *Macready*, there came a

brief conservative period, when efforts were made to restore the great Elizabethan poet, and to remove the crust of pigment which defaced his works.

But this movement degenerated into a spectacular show. It seemed necessary to envelop the poet in overwhelming vestments and sensation scenery. The more recent productions by Henry Irving and by Charles Kean are mere puppet shows when compared with the grandeur of the Macready revivals of "The Tempest," "As You Like It," "Henry the 5th," and "Lear." But, as I remarked at the time to Douglas Jerrold who sat beside me to witness one of these revivals, "This is not reviving Shakspeare, it is laying him out in state."

I can understand now how very unjust this sneer was! The profusion of great actors at that time rendered us blind to their merits. Macready, Vandenhoff, Phelps, Warde, Elton, Anderson, Helen Faucit, Mrs. Warner, Mrs. W. Clifford, Miss Vandenhoff. Ten great tragic artists all in one cast! But, in truth, the poet disappeared under the trappings and the splendid escort. Nevertheless, the passion for the original text of Shakspeare, for his restoration, was very sincere on the part of the public. In obedience to its impulse, Phelps produced "Macbeth" at Sadler's Wells Theatre, and, returning to the original stage directions, caused *Macduff* to enter in the last scene of the tragedy bearing the head of *Macbeth* upon a pole. This ghastly object proved too much for the public stomach. We should remember, however, that in the time of Shakspeare the people beheld the heads of culprits exposed in a row on Temple Bar. Such spectacles, being familiar, had lost their horror. If a row of nude female figures, such as we may see nightly in any burlesque, had been exposed in a similar fashion at the Globe Theatre at Bankside, in one of Shakspeare's plays, there is no doubt that the Elizabethan public would have revolted. *Autres temps, autres mœurs*. During my short lifetime I have remarked that the sense of decency has shifted from the *ear* to the *eye*. Fifty years ago language on the stage was unrestrained, and frequently we heard gross and blasphemous expressions. Such would not be tolerated to-day; but the dancers of that period wore their skirts down to their ankles, and Madame Vesties, in her burlesque characters, wore tunics which did not disclose the knees. Nowadays, the ear is sensitive; so if, the public can discover a phrase to which a double meaning can be applied, it is saluted with censure, while a nude exhibition is applauded, which a few years ago would have produced upon the spectators the effect of the head of *Macbeth*.

Could we interview Shakspeare on the question of his mutilation by his various undertakers, the ghost might deliver himself in this wise: "If I must be disemboweled and embalmed to be retained on the stage, it is very little matter to me by whom the operation is performed! Mr. Cibber and Mr. Garrick and Mr. Kemble are not more entitled to remodel me than are Mr. Irving and Mr. Kyrle Bellew! I feel under many obligations to Mr. Alma Tadema, of London, and to Mr. Worth, of Paris. But, in truth, while walking in ghostly hours the other night in Paris, I wished to enter a *bal masque*, when I perceived on the door a notice that no one could enter without a disguise and a mask, part of the entertainment being that each personage should remain unrecognized. 'It is in this fashion,' quoth I, 'that I enter an American theatre.'"

"But I cannot fairly complain of mutilation! My fellow-managers and the actors of the Globe treated all the plays we introduced there in a similar fashion. Such works were not held in much respect by us. The gothic drama, which at that time was coming into existence, was a shapeless, and sometimes a monstrous, thing; its chaos contained a heap of fine materials, but all was confusion and disorder. If it had not been so the actors would not, during three centuries, have

been employed as we see them to-day in changing, cutting, and adding to our works, which had little or no symmetry of form. If, by accident, we treated a subject like Othello, or Romeo and Juliet, which shaped itself because the action was composed of consecutive incidents, all necessary to each other, you will find there has been no attempt to reconstruct, or to take any literary liberties with such works. If no one has taken liberties with Sophocles or with Molière, it is because their plays were perfect in design. Ours represent packages of jewels, which may be reset to suit the prevailing fashion of the period. If you will consider the English mansions, and even many of the churches that remain as specimens of our taste in architecture, they will be found to contain half a dozen styles stuck together. The Norman will be found to be patched with Elizabethan, eked out by the false classic of Charles the Second. Can you imagine any Greek or Roman building, say the Parthenon at Athens, restored or completed by the addition of an Arabesque peristyle or a Gothic wing?"

Then you do not object to actresses such as Mrs. Langtry and Mrs. Potter appearing as your heroines?

"If Venus condescended to appear as *Rosalind*, and Hebe consented to perform *Juliet*, I should be there to see, and delight in, their efforts. The boys who originally played *Cleopatra* and *Lady Macbeth* squeaked through those plays in a grotesque manner. So *Cleopatra*, foreseeing that she will be made an object of derision in Rome, to which city she will be brought a prisoner, to be shown to the populace as an Egyptian puppet, exclaims:

"The quick comedians
Extemporally will stage us and present
Our Alexandrian revels; Antony
Shall be brought drunken forth and I shall see
Some squeaking *Cleopatra* boy my greatness—"

But did you find the ladies equal to the task they undertook?

"I could not see for looking! Mine eyes were made the fools of the other senses, and were worth all the rest."

By the way, before you go, may I inquire if you wrote "*Antony and Cleopatra*"?

"The muddle of minds and new styles of expression that you may perceive throughout the play answers the question. I had a hand in it."

I recognize it in the description by *Enobarbus* of the galley of *Cleopatra*.

"Wrong again," replied the poet, "that was written by Ben Jonson. I added the last five lines"

And so ended my interview with the spirit.

DION BOUCICAULT.